

CVs and Covering Letters in Brief

THE CV

The reverse Chronological CV is suitable for most situations. It lists education and work experience in reverse date order (most recent first). Evidence of skills and achievements are built into the CV against the relevant experience.

Format and Structure

- Most UK CVs should be two A4 sized pages, unless otherwise stated by the employer.
- Your best selling points should always come first within a section.
- Allocate space according to importance to the job for which you are applying – expand on areas of relevance.
- You can draw the recruiter's attention to relevant experience by grouping it together under an appropriate sub-heading eg Legal Work Experience, Financial Work Experience, Scientific Work Experience, Technical Work Experience or Relevant Work Experience.
- Use headings which best describe the content of the section. Adapt the headings to fit your needs eg Awards and Achievements, Positions of Responsibility and Achievements.
- Putting lines between sections and the use of boxes or tables with lined borders can clutter up your CV making it difficult to read. Tables without borders can be useful for formatting neatly in columns.
- Use a standard font that is easy to read and looks professional. Use the same font style throughout.

Style

- Keep sentences short and precise.
- Bullet points can look effective and help you to write short, dynamic sentences. If you want to use paragraphs keep them short.

Content

- Must be tailored to the requirements of the reader. What skills and experience are they looking for?
- Spelling and grammar are very important; do not rely on spell checks.
- Personal profiles are optional; they are best suited to speculative applications or in circumstances where you are not using a cover letter.
- All skills claims must be backed up by evidence.

Structuring your examples - the CAR Model

Context – What was the situation – keep it brief, but specific.

Action – What did YOU do? What was your role? What actions did you take? Use action words.

Result – What was the outcome? What did you achieve? What was improved? Qualify and quantify.

References

Unless otherwise stated, provide names of two referees. These will depend on the role, your circumstances and what has been requested. More on references:

www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/students/applicationsinterviews/af/references

THE COVERING LETTER

When sending a CV, you need to include a covering letter. The covering letter is your personal sales pitch, where you introduce yourself as a candidate and discuss why you want the job. It should be professional and business like in style and layout. In brief it should cover:

1. Why you are applying to this company? - What makes them stand out from other similar companies?
2. Why you are applying for this role? - Your motivation for applying, show your understanding of the role.
3. The skills and experience you have that match the job description.

Covering letters should be tailored for each job. If you cut and paste the company name and use the letter for any other employer, your letter will not convince the reader that you want to work for them. Even the least experienced recruiter can spot a 'mailshot' at a glance!

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title:	Staff Nurse (Newly Qualified)
Band:	5

FACTOR	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	HOW DEMONSTRATED
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RSCN or RN (Adult) ▪ Current NMC registration and qualified less than 6 months 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application ▪ Interview ▪ Registration Documents
Skills, Abilities and Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good written and verbal communication skills ▪ Ability to organise workload and delegate tasks appropriately ▪ Supports and contributes to team approaches and working ▪ Problem solving – able to analyse and resolve issues on own initiative ▪ Decision making within limitation of role and demonstrates awareness of own limits ▪ Able to demonstrate partnership working with patients and their families ▪ Able to demonstrate ability to negotiate and work out problems with patients, families and the MDT 	Interest in and experience of care giving in either a community or acute setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application ▪ Interview ▪ References
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Motivated to personal and professional development of self ▪ Willingness to be flexible and adaptable ▪ Open minded, treats colleagues and the general public with dignity and respect ▪ Capacity to work with colleagues at all levels ▪ Exemplary personal standards of conduct and behaviour ▪ Enthusiasm and motivational skills 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application ▪ Interview ▪ References

JULIE GREEN

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CAREER OBJECTIVE

A recently qualified adult nurse with a strong commitment to providing high quality patient centred care. Highly motivated and enthusiastic, I am keen to use and build on the skills gained as a student. I am seeking a first post in general medicine nursing where I can use my excellent communication skills to work within the multi-disciplinary team to plan and prioritise care, helping to rehabilitate patients for their discharge

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

2012-2015 University of Manchester School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work

BNurs (Adult Nursing) Result 2.1

- Gained an insight into local community health needs whilst conducting my research project
- Required organisational skills and the ability to analyse large quantities of data
- Achieved 74% for the resulting Neighbourhood Study Report

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

2012-2015: A range of placements undertaken over three years including:

Management Experience – Medical Unit

- Used my supervisory skills to manage a group of patients effectively, delegating patient care, assessing and monitoring the impact of interventions

Accident & Emergency

- Able to work under pressure and manage time effectively
- Team working skills developed through interacting professionally with experienced members of the team, referring for support and advice when required

Medical Unit

- Developed and built upon my interpersonal skills, showing empathy and understanding to patients and their families
- Gained clinical skills in the area of rehabilitation and the ability to accurately assess patient's needs
- Acquired new skills and an understanding of the need for flexibility
- Acted on my own initiative when planning patient care
- Enhanced my assessment and problem solving skills whilst caring for a diabetic: planning, implementing and evaluating care whilst utilising available resources such as the diabetes specialist nurse

Surgical Unit

- An opportunity to appreciate the need to communicate effectively with patients and their families at stressful times
- Gained my initial experience working as part of a multi-disciplinary team
- Effectively Implemented wound care strategies devised with senior members of the team

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

2005-2012 Chester High School, Chester

GCSE A Levels – Biology B, English B, Psychology C
9 GCSEs incl Maths B, English language B, Biology B, Chemistry B

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

- 2014 **University of Manchester Student Night Line Counselling Service - Volunteer Counsellor**
Undertook initial training in counselling skills and went on to provide a telephone counselling service one evening per week as part of a team of student helpers. Developed high level empathy and listening skills and an appreciation of the need for confidentiality. Worked within the limits of my training and sought guidance from more experienced colleagues if faced with difficult issues.
- 2011-12 **Pine Lodge Day Centre, Chester – Part time Care Assistant**
Worked as a member of the care-team, providing quality care and personal support to individuals with severe learning disabilities, their families and carers. Treated individuals with dignity and respect at all times. Gave me an insight into care in the community and the vital role of the multi-disciplinary team
- 2011-12 **Boots the Chemist, Chester - Saturday Sales Assistant**
Responsible for providing high standards of customer service, replenishing stock and cashing up at the end of the day. Shift work required me to work flexibly and change my hours, often at short notice. Achieved NVQ Level 2 in Customer Service. Promoted to staff supervisor after four months in post.

POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2014 Participated in two day training course in mentoring and coordinated production of a booklet for new students. Went on to provide support and encouragement to three student nurses during initial induction and throughout their 1st year. Greatly improved my communication and presentation skills
- 2013 Elected Student Nurse Representative. Participated in course management meetings and Curriculum Development Group raising issues on behalf of student nurses and following up with progress reports. Contributed articles to the student newsletter including "Nursing practise in a Surgical Unit – a student perspective" Required attention to detail, the ability to work to deadlines plus planning and organising ability

PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS

2012-date Student member of Royal College of Nursing- keep up to date with professional issues

ADDITIONAL SKILLS AND INTERESTS

- Full, clean driving licence
- Proficient in the use of IT packages – Word, Access, Excel, Internet and Email
- Participate in regular sporting activities - fell walking and swimming for enjoyment and to maintain personal fitness

REFEREES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST (Should include one academic and one clinical)